

JCTD Project to Meet Information Sharing Need in Humanitarian and Reconstruction Efforts



U.S. Navy medical officer and non-governmental organization personnel care for 2005 tsunami victims

The 2005 tsunami relief efforts in Southeast Asia and reconstruction operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have shown the importance of sharing information, not only among U.S. agencies, but transnational ones as well. For example, U.S. military medical units must be able to collaborate with nongovernmental organizations in refugee operations to ensure a coordinated effort. In addition, transnational information sharing is needed to meet such anticipated threats as Avian Flu.

To meet this need, the Joint Capability Technology Demonstration (JCTD) program recently launched the Transnational Information Sharing Cooperation (TISC) JCTD. This JCTD seeks to provide an online information sharing capability among organizations — U.S. and otherwise — involved in stabilization, reconstruction, and humanitarian efforts. Such a capability will enhance these organizations' collective situational awareness, collaboration, decision making, and implementation. This web-based capability is similar to an extranet, which is often used in business partnerships between several companies.

The TISC JCTD is integrating open source software solutions to enable this online information sharing. Web services will permit a broad spectrum of organizations to use the Internet for collaboration on a particular operation. External partners will easily and freely have access to the open source solutions as well as be able to participate in actual product development. However, such a collaborative effort is much more than just technology. It also depends on policies, procedures and practices, which this JCTD will also address.

This capability will be achieved through a spiral development process. The first limited demonstration occurred at the Coalition Warfare Interoperability Demonstration 2008. A spiral development will be demonstrated in the U.S. European Command's Africa



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Endeavor and Combined Endeavor exercises in 2009. The last spiral will be assessed in the U.S. Southern Command's Allied Forces humanitarian exercise in 2010.

For more information on the JCTD program, visit its website at www.acq.osd.mil/jctd.